

Exodus 34:29-35

So here we have Moses descending from the mountain with the two tablets, unaware that his face was radiant from speaking with God. Other translations read, “The skin of his face was shone, or shining” (NRSV). We are told earlier in chapter 33 what happened to Moses while he was on the mountain to cause his face to be shining. The Lord tells Moses “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, but you can’t see my face and live. But here’s what I will do for you Moses, when I come down I will put you in between these two rocks and when I pass by I will cover you with my hand until I passed by. Once I am passed I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but not my face.” Moses saw the goodness, or as some commentaries say, the glory of the Lord. This event physically altered Moses appearance. God tells us that His glory is so great that if you see it in full, you want live. Moses only saw God’s back, but it was so great and bright that Moses’ face was radiating from God’s glory. Moses’ appearance was changed in such a way that his own brother was scared of him.

We aren’t exactly sure how Moses was glowing or shining. The verb used in these verses is radiant or shine and the Hebrew word is karan (qaran) which is similar to the Hebrew word for horn, keren. Some have translated this passage as Moses having “horn like rays” shining from his head. That is why for centuries Moses has been depicted as having horns in art work, one of the most famous ones being Michelangelo’s Moses.

So we have Moses with his glowing face that is reflecting God’s glory. This is scaring Aaron and the rest of the Israelites, but Moses assures them and calls them over and speaks to them. Yet when he was done speaking to the people he put a veil over his face. When you first read this part of text you might ask, “Why is he covering up God’s glory?” Maybe the glow off Moses was so intense that he had to cover his face, and he is protecting the Israelites. Or it could be that the glow of God needs to be protected from common contact because it is that sacred and is not to be trivialized or cheapened. The reality is that we don’t know why Moses wore a veil; we don’t know why he covered his face. We do know that he didn’t completely keep God’s glory hidden from the people. You see Moses was a mediator between God and God’s people; Moses was a messenger for God. When Moses would meet and talk with God he would removed the veil and when he would talk to the people he would uncover his face to reflect God’s Glory. Moses is sharing God’s glory...

This particular story of Moses is awesome and is important to our faith. Moses had this strange and incomprehensible experience with God on top of that mountain. Moses could have easily kept this unique experience of seeing God all to himself and kept the veil over his face, but he didn’t. Moses was sharing his experience he had with God, by letting God’s Glory shine. Moses had been transformed by being in God’s presence and he let the Israelites know his story. He did something with his experience...

Some of us can name a specific time when we had that transforming moment with God and maybe even name more than one experience. Some of us can’t name that one moment when we were transformed because it occurred over an extended period of time and we had to look back at those experiences to realize that was a God moment. Either way, if you have had a moment with God that has transformed you, you need to let others know about it. You have a story to tell! We all have God moments and we all have a story to tell. Some of you know your story, some of you may not know it yet, and that’s

ok. That just means that yours isn't ready yet, you just don't have the words to tell it, but you will... Go to God in prayer and ask Him to reveal those moments to you, because at the time the transformation occurred you did not recognize God's fingerprint on it. I am one of those people who did not know what my story was until I looked back at different events throughout my life.

I grew up attending church camp in Southern Illinois at Camp Walter Scott. Started going to camp after I finished third grade and went every summer until I finished High school. At this camp there is an outdoor sanctuary where we would end our night with worship. This sanctuary was at the top of a hill that look out over the lake. On a clear calm night you could see the moon and the stars reflecting off the water. It was in this place, during worship, I remember having this sensation come over me that I have never felt before. It is hard to explain, but I just felt this wave of joy and peace fall on me. It instantly brought a smile to my face and I just knew that I was going be alright. I wasn't even worried about sleeping with the spiders and mosquitoes. This sensation, this feeling of calmness, didn't just happen once, but repeatedly as I sat in that out door sanctuary that looked out on to the lake. For years I didn't realize what it was that caused me to feel that way. I thought I was just happy to be with my friends or to be singing cool camp songs.

Another story I want to tell you is about going to coffee hour with my Dad. I did this when I was in kindergarten because at that time kindergarten went a full day, but only every other day. So, the days I was not in school I would go into the office with my Dad, as many of you know he is a minister. Almost everyday my Dad would go to the diner down the street from the church for coffee. This would consist of locale business men, the fire chief, the sheriff, the deputy, and some other folks who were retired. Basically it was like scene from Mayberry. It was not until several years later I realized what was going on at that diner. You see I did not recognize what was happening and who was present... God was present at coffee hour. My Dad was radiating Christ Love, he was reflecting God's glory.

Those nights at church camp when the moon and stars were reflecting off the lake and I was hit with this wave of joy and peace, I didn't know it at the time, but those were my God moments. God in all of His glory passed before me and I was transformed, but I did not realize at that time, it took me several years of talking with God before He helped me find the words to tell my story. To tell you about my God moments that transformed me. We all have a story to tell.

You might or might not be able to relate to my story, if not that's ok. Because are stories aren't going to be the same because we all experience different things throughout our lives. I am sure you have heard other people share their stories and they're what we call "mountaintop experiences." Guess what, not all of us are going to have mountaintop experiences like Moses. God can travel down to the lost valley to. Some of you can point to and name the lost point in your life... It could have been the death of a loved one... Maybe you or family members were in an abusive relationship. You may have had an addiction and you fought through it and to this day you fight to stay sober. Maybe you have been hurt deeply by someone you love, a spouse, sibling, child, or parent... You have had a moment in your life when you hit rock bottom, but it was at that lowest point that God in all His glory passed before you, and that is your God moment! That is when you were transformed!

Last weekend bought a new CD and it's a Christian music artist, Toby Mac. One of his songs is titled "Stories." I want to share with you the opening lyrics:

**We've been down to the bottom,
Stories we got'em, when we hit rock bottom,
If you been there put your hands in the air,
To let the lost know that someone cares,
Cause we've been down to the bottom,
Stories we've got'em, when we hit rock bottom,
If you have been there put your hands in the air,
And let somebody know that the Most High cares**

When you've been down to the bottom, you have a story to tell and your story my just help share God's glory with someone else.

We all have different stories to tell because we all experience God's glory in different ways and at different times in our lives. Some of you may not have your words in order yet, to tell your story. You and God are still working on that. Some of you have the words and can share your God moments. You can share when God in all His glory passed before you and you were transformed. You have to share your story. We are called as Christians to reflect God's Glory through the love of Christ.

We all have a story to tell. We are called to share the Glory of God. So share! Go share your story.